

The circus, the Big Top, the center ring, bright lights, clowns, and unfortunately, animals. So, just how do circuses get these animals to perform? Long-term abuse and neglect.

Have you ever seen the cute dancing bears all dressed up? Trainers have been known to burn the bottoms of dancing bears' feet so, by shifting their weight from foot to foot, the bears appear to dance. Lions and tigers are kept in line with whips. Elephants' legs are smashed with iron bars and bull hooks if they don't please the trainers. Some animals have had their teeth removed (without anesthetic) or knocked out with a hammer to keep the handlers from being bit. As well, animals have also been found to be drugged.

Maiming these beautiful creatures and starving them is commonplace in training for the circus. Verified reports include emaciation, beatings so severe that bodies are covered with festering abscesses and lumps on the animals' heads from beatings. Animals usually do not get proper veterinary care, if any at all.

Much of the cruelty goes on behind the scenes and spectators to the circus do not see it. At performance time, the trainer then only needs to use the sight of the bull hook or whip and not actually use it in order to "persuade" the animal into performing a trick.

What about the circus animals that finally go berserk and go on a rampage due to their treatment? They attack trainers and circus-goers alike. You may have even seen footage of these types of events on television.

Other "benefits" of being a circus animal include being caged for long periods of time between shows. A study conducted by Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) discovered that 96 percent of a circus animal's life is spent in confinement. And, when they are on the road for weeks at a time, they ride in filthy trucks or on a train. I've seen a baby elephant lying on her belly, spread-eagle, chained to the ground so that she could not move. This is part of the training to break her spirit so that she is easier to train.

And what becomes of the circus animals that are no longer wanted because they are too sick or too old to perform anymore? Again, documentation shows that they can be abandoned in locked cages in the middle of nowhere to starve or sold to places where they'll end up in a "canned hunt".

There are plenty of circuses without animals that are absolutely terrific--I have seen some. Animal-free circuses include, but are not limited to, the following: Cirque du Soleil, Circus Vargas, Kelly Miller Circus, Bindlestiff Family Cirkus, Circus Finelli, Cirque Italia, Cirque Éloize, Gregangelo & Velocity Circus Troupe, Imperial Circus, and New Shanghai Circus.

It is time to protect the public and animals from harm. Please support HB 5293. Thank you.

“Animals in Traveling Circuses: The Science on Suffering”

<https://www.stopcircussuffering.com/get-involved/animals-traveling-circuses-science-suffering/?fbclid=IwAR0cQSycJx2mvo-R2LZ1ZBkYGnnKywWPYNIDwzKPDD9SmGu34leDVSrZQWM>

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